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LETTER DATED 11 JULY 1995 FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF FINLAND AND THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the request of the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, we have the honour to transmit their letter of 5 July 1995 addressed to you (see annex).

Please have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) F. W. BREITENSTEIN
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of Finland to the United Nations

(Signed) V. SIDOROV
Ambassador
Acting Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

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Annex

Letter dated 5 July 1995 from the Co-Chairmen of the Minsk Conference of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe addressed to the President of the Security Council

In connection with the statement by the President of the United Nations Security Council of 26 April 1995 (S/PRST/1995/21) and after consultation with the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), we are submitting to the Security Council the latest progress report on the Minsk process and the efforts undertaken within the framework of that process with a view to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict.

During the period that has elapsed since the last report (S/1995/321, annex), two rounds of talks have taken place between the parties to the conflict (in Moscow from 15 to 18 May and in Helsinki from 15 to 19 June), following which consultations have been held by the delegations of the Minsk Group participating States, some of which have included the representatives of the parties.

The Co-Chairmen note that the talks aimed at a political agreement on the cessation of the armed conflict have taken place in a businesslike atmosphere, thus facilitating the negotiation of a number of provisions to be included in a draft of the aforementioned agreement. They appealed to the conflicting parties to continue negotiations without preconditions and linkages with other questions, to demonstrate perseverance in overcoming difficulties, to ensure the stability and irreversibility of the negotiations, bearing in mind the crucial importance of the conclusion of this agreement for effective assistance to be provided by the international community in the resolution of the conflict and, in particular, for the deployment of the multinational OSCE peace-keeping operation. Alongside the work on a draft agreement, the parties have engaged in a parallel discussion of issues of key importance to the comprehensive settlement of the conflict.

It is a source of great satisfaction that, thanks to the restraint shown by the parties to the conflict for more than 13 months, the cease-fire in the Nagorny Karabakh area of conflict has, on the whole, been observed. A factor of particular significance from the point of view of preventing a renewal of hostilities has been the utilization of the mechanism of direct contacts between the parties with a view to the settlement of potential incidents.

Great alarm has been caused by the acts of sabotage directed against communication routes linking Armenia with the outside world. The Chairman-in-Office of OSCE and the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Conference issued a statement on 25 May condemning acts of terrorism and sabotage in the conflict region.

The Co-Chairmen have continued to argue for the taking of confidence-building measures by the parties. In connection with the first anniversary of the cease-fire and international appeals from many quarters, the Republic of

Armenia released all prisoners and detainees and repatriated them to Baku. In response, the Azerbaijani Republic made an important reciprocal move. Certain steps were also taken by the Nagorny Karabakh leadership. It is essential to urgently complete this important humanitarian action for the release of all prisoners and detainees in close cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross. The Minsk Group participating States have called on the leaders of the parties to the conflict to declare an amnesty for those who participated in the armed conflict.

The participating States of OSCE have continued to give their attention to the efforts being made to settle the conflict within the framework of the Minsk process. The High-Level Planning Group has continued its efforts to plan a multinational OSCE peace-keeping operation. This work is proceeding under the guidance of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, who is endeavouring to obtain the necessary international support for this operation and intends very shortly to appoint a personal representative and field representatives in the region.

The report by the Co-Chairmanship of the Minsk Conference on the progress made in the negotiating process was delivered at a meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council on 29 June. The members of the Council expressed their support for the efforts being made to settle the conflict within the framework of the Minsk process.

The Co-Chairmen intend to conduct consultations with the parties in the conflict region at the earliest possible date and then to convene a meeting of the Minsk Group with the participation of the parties in Baden, Austria, in the latter half of July.

(Signed) H. TALVITIE
Co-Chairman of the OSCE
Minsk Conference

(Signed) V. LOZINSKY
Co-Chairman of the OSCE
Minsk Conference